

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MASERU 00284 171442Z

44

ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /042 W
----- 086919

R 171015Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4742

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, LT

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER'S REQUEST TO VISIT U.S.

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH ME ON MARCH 15 FOREIGN MINISTER KOTSOKOANE EXPRESSED STRONG INTEREST IN A 30-DAY IV GRANT TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES BETWEEN JUNE 15 AND JULY 15, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE. I STRONGLY URGE APPROVAL OF THIS GRANT AND THAT THE DEPARTMENT ATTEMPT FIND MEANS OF FUNDING MRS. KOTSOKOANE'S TRAVEL ALSO.

2. THE FOREIGN MINISTER BELIEVES THERE IS A BIG RESERVOIR OF GOOD-WILL FOR LESOTHO IN THE UNITED STATES THAT IS NOT BEING SUFFICIENTLY TAPPED. HE BELIEVES THAT A GREATER PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT MUST BE MOUNTED TO RAISE LESOTHO'S VISIBILITY IN THE U.S. AND TO PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF LESOTHO AND ITS PROBLEMS IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CONTEXT. DURING HIS VISIT TO THE U.S. THE MINISTER WOULD BE PREPARED TO MEET WITH OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON, SPEAK TO GROUPS INTERESTED IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND HOLD PRESS AND TV INTERVIEWS.

3. COMMENT: KOTSOKOANE IS ONE OF MOST ARTICULATE, VISIBLE, AND SOPHISTICATED MEMBERS OF LESOTHO CABINET, AND HIS INFLUENCE IN GOL IS GROWING. HE IS LIKELY TO BE AT CENTER OF DECISION MAKING PROCESS IN MATTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HE
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PAGE 02 MASERU 00284 171442Z

SPENT A YEAR STUDYING AGRICULTURE AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, OTHERWISE HAS HAD LITTLE CHANCE TO TRAVEL
IN U.S. HE STILL SPEAKS FREQUENTLY AND FONDLY OF HIS EXPERIENCE
IN U.S. MRS. KOTSOKOANE IS CHARMING, ATTRACTIVE AND OPEN
WOMAN, WIDELY KNOWN AND RESPECTED IN LESOTHO; SHE HAS NOT
HAD OPPORTUNITY TO TRAVEL IN U.S.

4. EMBASSY FORWARDING IV GRANT NOMINATION FOR MINISTER
KOTSOKOANE. REQUEST DEPT SEEK PRIVATE FINANCING FOR
MRS. KOTSOKOANE AND ADVISE ASAP.
BOLEN

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NNN

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